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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: BURUNDI'S PRESIDENT TO MEET WITH FNL'S AGATHON
RWASA

¶1. (SBU) Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza and Forces Nationales de Liberation (FNL) leader Agathon Rwasa will participate in talks June 17 in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania, according to the African Union (AU) special envoy to the peace negotiations between the Government of Burundi (GOB) and the FNL. AU special envoy Kingsley Mamabolo arrived in Bujumbura June 14 and met with President Nkurunziza. After his meeting with Nkurunziza, Mamabolo stated in an interview on Radio Bonesha FM that the President and Rwasa would discuss the implementation of the cease-fire signed by the GOB and the FNL in September 2006. The President's office confirmed to the embassy, subsequently, that the meeting would take place in Dar-Es-Salaam on June 17, and that Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete would also participate in the meeting.

¶2. (SBU) The proposed meeting with Rwasa comes on the eve of Tanzanian President Kikwete's planned visit to Bujumbura on June 19. The status of the implementation of the cease fire agreement is expected to figure prominently on the agenda during the visit, as are refugee issues. President Nkurunziza's office confirmed that the President would travel directly from Dar-Es-Salaam to Kampala to attend the June 18 meeting of the East African Community. President Nkurunziza will return to Burundi immediately thereafter to meet with President Kikwete.

¶3. (SBU) Comment. The timing of the planned Nkurunziza-Rwasa meeting, coming just before Tanzanian President Kikwete's much-anticipated visit to Bujumbura suggests that both countries are eager to ensure the success of the visit. End Comment.
BREITER